



<http://translate.google.com/>

Google Translate

In 2013, “Google Translate” would translate text from and to the following languages:

From: Detect language ▼	↔	To: Afrikaans ▼	Translate
Detect language			
Afrikaans		Catalan	Finnish
Albanian		Cebuano	French
Arabic		Chinese	Galician
Armenian		Croatian	Georgian
Azerbaijani		Czech	German
Basque		Danish	Greek
Belarusian		Dutch	Gujarati
Bengali		English	Haitian Creole
Bosnian		Esperanto	Hebrew
Bulgarian		Estonian	Hindi
		Filipino	Hmong
			Hungarian
			Icelandic
			Indonesian
			Irish
			Italian
			Japanese
			Javanese
			Kannada
			Khmer
			Korean
			Lao
			Latin
			Latvian
			Lithuanian
			Macedonian
			Malay
			Maltese
			Marathi
			Norwegian
			Persian
			Polish
			Portuguese
			Romanian
			Russian
			Serbian
			Slovak
			Slovenian
			Spanish
			Swahili
			Swedish
			Tamil
			Telugu
			Thai
			Turkish
			Ukrainian
			Urdu
			Vietnamese
			Welsh
			Yiddish

These languages are 71 in number, and they include only one indigenous African language: Swahili.

By 2015 the total had increased to 90 languages, of which 9 are indigenous African languages, namely Chichewa (Nyanja), Hausa, Igbo, Malagasy, Sesotho, Somali, Swahili, Yoruba and Zulu.

Lingala is not there, Kinyarwanda is not there, Wolof is not there, Amharic is not there, Gikuyu and Dholuo are not there. Hundreds of African languages remain to be included.

The advent of free, online, automatic translation services is a great boon and a help to people. In our continent, where so many languages are spoken, it opens the prospect of people being able to communicate much better than before across language barriers – if they have written text.

Printed text can be scanned and rendered into digital text using Optical Character Recognition (OCR). Once in that form it can be translated by Google Translate or by similar software.

Machine translation

Computer translation is a great assistance, but it is not perfect. Computer translation has to be corrected, because it always contains errors, and serious errors at that.

Computer translation assists because it quickly gives you a draft to work on.

To correct the draft, you must apply your own knowledge of the languages, or use an old-fashioned dictionary, or else the computer-equivalent of an old-fashioned dictionary.

Translation is an art. Computer translation cannot complete the artistic function of the translator.

South Africans have not come to terms with translation, yet. This is so, not only true in terms of the eleven official languages, and other languages spoken in South Africa, but also in terms of international languages used in other parts of Africa such as French, Portuguese, Arabic, and Swahili.

This becomes at some point a political problem, because politics relies on communication. Anything that inhibits communication can have a political effect.

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